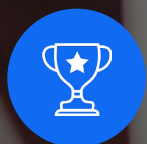




DEMAND GEN UNLOCKED

Insights, Challenges, and Strategies for the Future



2025 Insights from 1,000+ B2B demand generation professionals

Executive Foreword from AudiencePlus

This report is a breath of fresh air.

In between hot takes on LinkedIn (I'm a guilty contributor), the newest AI technology, and the inevitable debate about the newest AI technology (again, it's me), it's a nice reprise to go heads down in data.

Not just any data. It's high-quality, highly relevant, and highly vetted data. My favorite data point from this report may be that the TrustRadius team disqualified nearly 1,000 survey responses. Those responses didn't reach the level of quality deemed valuable. In a time when it's so easy to say "yes" to "more, more, more," this report is a focus on what matters. No hot takes, no buzzy trends—just genuine, helpful data.

We've dug into compensation, budgets, sales/marketing alignment, AI (surprise!), and metrics that matter. While our feeds and inboxes are full of artificial, this is real feedback from real people. I've scribbled my notes from the report and I'm excited for you to have your own perspective. The world is changing fast, and community is one of the lone constants. This report represents our demand generation community sharing what we know, what we believe, and where we are going. Enjoy!

Jonathon Gandolf
Co-Founder & CEO
AudiencePlus



What Does Demand Gen Even Mean These Days?

Last year, marketers were busy coining phrases to blend demand gen and brand—arguing that one drives the other and you can’t have one without both. “Brand gen” caught on before “brand-led growth” became the next big buzzword.

As we uncovered in our [2024 B2B Buying Disconnect Report, The Year of the Brand Crisis](#), only recently have marketers started to truly grasp the value of “brand”—especially in the early, “problem-aware” stage of the buyer’s journey. You need a brand that captures mindshare in order to make a buyer’s short (short) list, otherwise you weren’t considered at all.

No matter which strategy you are running with, go-to-market teams need to gain mindshare and be a trusted brand that people want to align themselves and their careers to. This is really the only way to stand out in today’s overcrowded markets.

To add insult to injury, artificial intelligence has flipped the game—again. In our 2025 B2B Buyer Research Report, [Bridging the Trust Gap: B2B Tech Buying in the Age of AI](#), we found that buyers have largely integrated AI into their purchasing journey. The report predicts that winning brand-led growth strategies will require content investments that feed large language models (LLMs) and AI-powered search—ensuring your brand and product surface early in the research process.

And with vendors reporting that 38% of their discretionary budget is going toward brand awareness and 53% toward demand gen, the big question is, **are marketers keeping up or are market demands shifting faster, making that impossible?**

So, regardless if you think brand is the new demand or if outbound or content are dead and AI is eating the world, brand trust is a constant and the most sustainable way to drive demand, now and for the long game.



With so much noise—and so many shifting definitions—we wanted to get a real pulse check from today’s demand gen community:

Where do they really stand in their **careers**?

What are they **focused** on?

What’s actually helping them **drive results**?

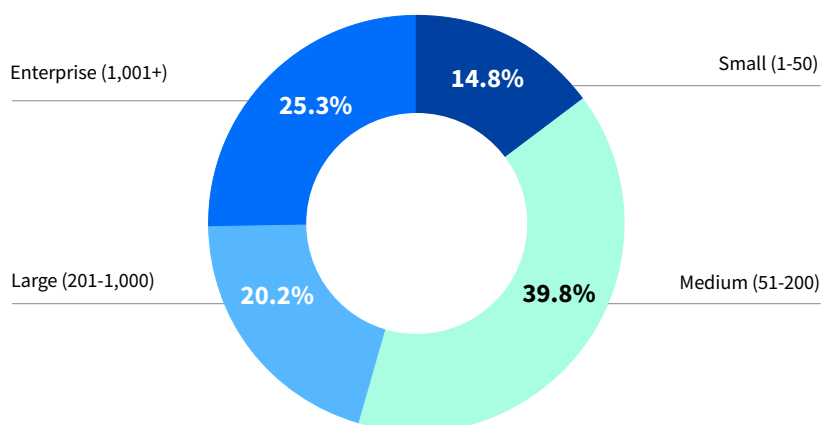
Are they **thriving**—or just surviving?

Meet the Demand Gen Leaders We Surveyed

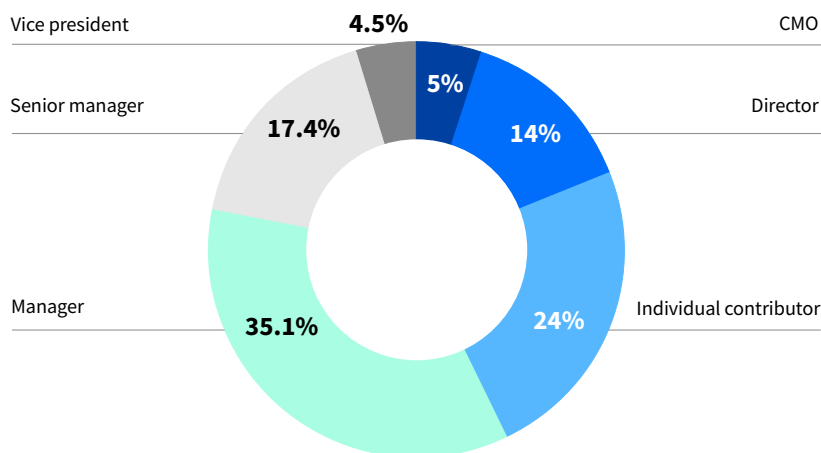
With the help of [AudiencePlus](#), [TrustRadius](#) received over 2,000 survey responses, and through a rigorous vetting process we qualified just over 1,000 for inclusion in this report. We verified each respondent's company size, industry, and location to ensure credibility and relevance. This made our final dataset a representation of diverse demand-gen marketing professionals. Most respondents hold mid- to senior-level roles, with the largest groups being managers (35%), individual

contributors (24%), and senior managers (17%). The majority earn between \$81,000 and \$140,000 annually, with an overall average salary of \$123,000. Respondents had been in their current roles for an average of one year and nine months and expected to stay nearly two years on average. Participants came from a range of companies, with the largest segments representing mid-sized organizations.

Size of Organization



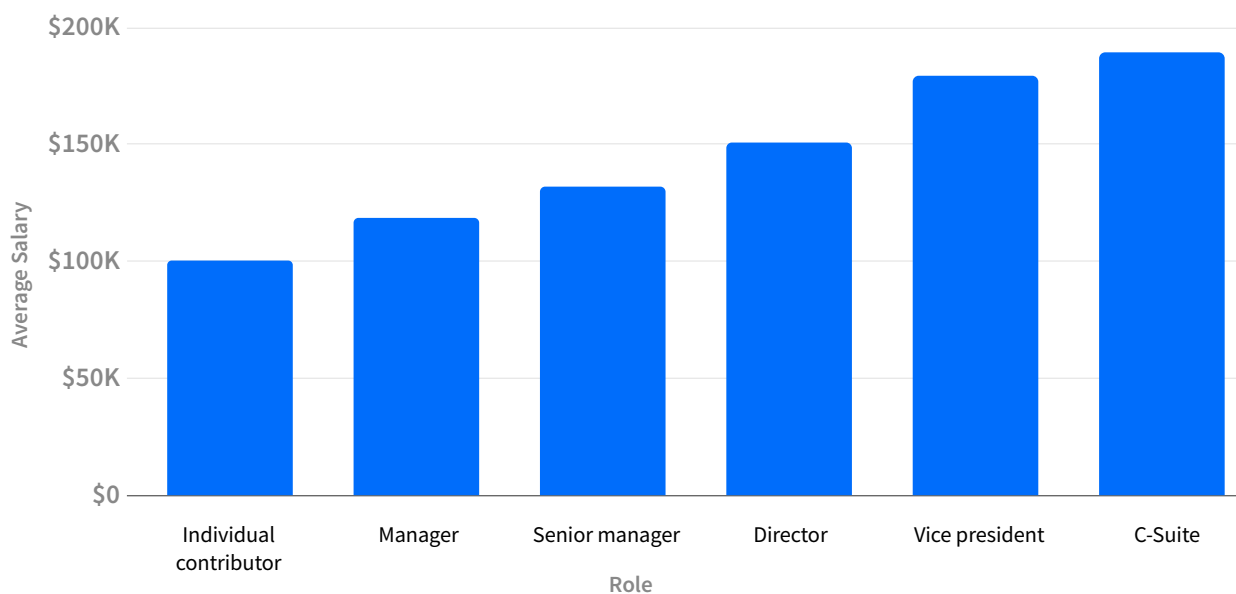
Demand Generation Roles



Inside Demand Gen Compensation Trends

The chart below visualizes how salaries increase as demand gen marketers' careers grow. While there is clear momentum, the most significant jump occurs between the senior manager and director roles, highlighting the importance of these roles within an organization. Average salaries climb from \$130K at the senior manager level to nearly \$150K at director, with an additional expected increase at the vice president and C-suite levels, where averages hit \$181K and \$186K, respectively. While salary bands overlap across roles, higher-level positions see more surveyed marketers earning \$200K+, whereas lower levels tend to cluster in the \$80K–\$140K range. For marketers planning their next move, this data reinforces the importance of leveling up skills and scope of responsibility early, especially when aiming for the director title. It is the gateway to executive pay.

Average Salary vs. Role

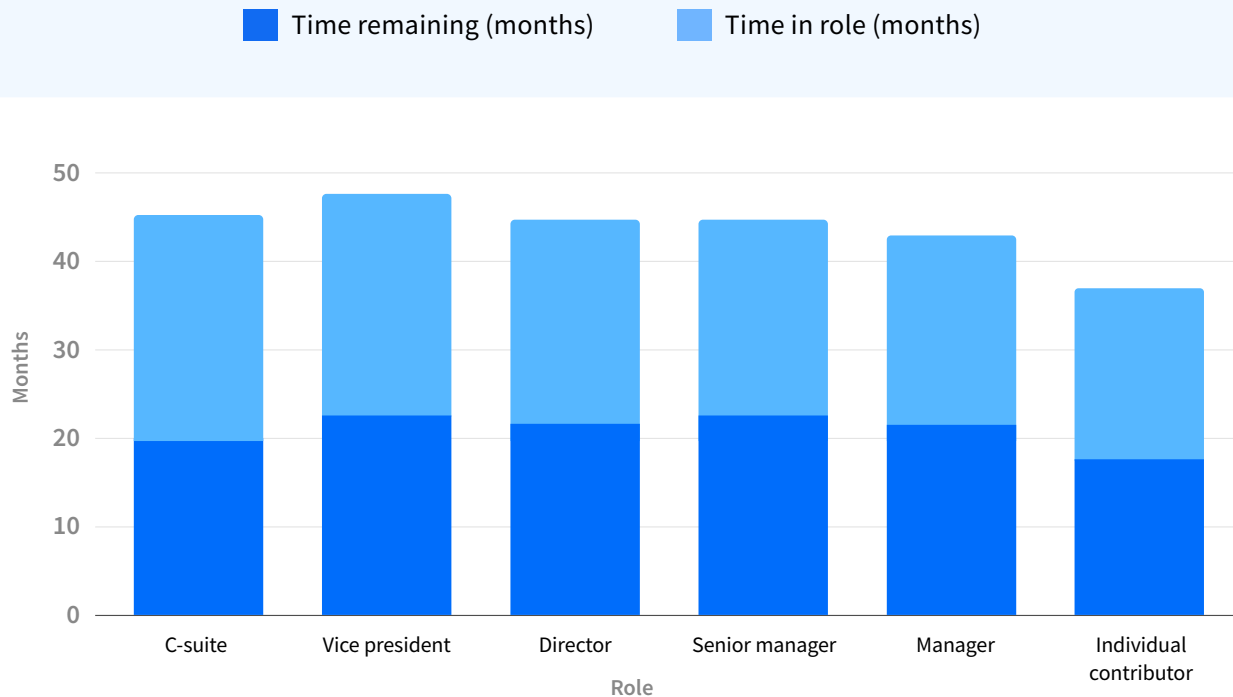


Tenure and Turnover Risk by Role

While average tenure is relatively steady across levels, there are early signs of churn risk, especially in more junior roles. C-suite leaders have been in their current roles for an average of one year and eight months and plan to stay just over two years. Vice presidents and directors show similar patterns, hovering around 22 to 25 months for both time in role and planned time remaining.

Turnover risk begins to rise further down the ladder. Among senior managers and managers, the average for both time in role and expected time remaining is just under two years. The biggest gap appears at the individual contributor level. Although they have the shortest average tenure, at just under 18 months, they also expect to stay for less than 20 months on average. In the tech industry, the employee turnover rate in 2024 was generally high, with estimates ranging from [13.2% to 18%](#). In this survey, respondents were asked about this as well, and in sharp contrast, 2.5% of respondents across all levels said they plan to leave within the next three months.

Tenure by Role

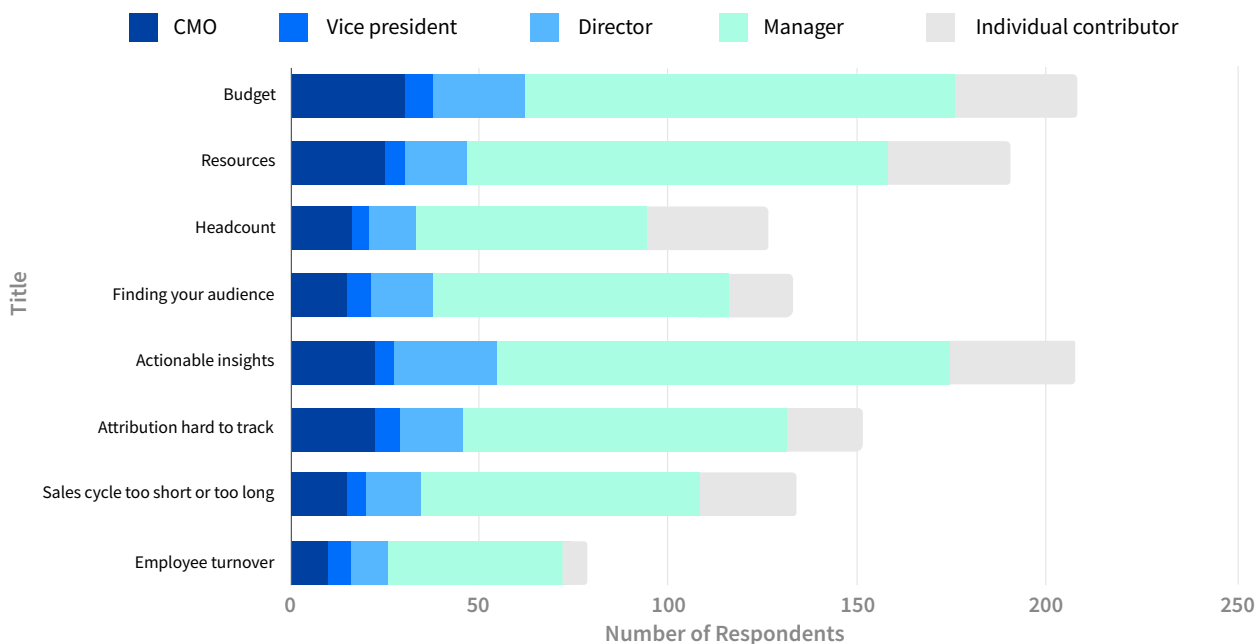


The Biggest Obstacles in Demand Generation

Budget is far and away the most common challenge for demand generation professionals when forced to choose just one, with almost 50%. It consistently outranked all other issues across roles and company sizes. Taking a broader look, surveyed marketers surfaced a wider mix of concerns, including limited headcount, questionable attribution, and difficulty reaching the right audience. These issues reflect a more nuanced view of the pressures that demand gen teams face today.

Patterns vary by seniority. CMOs and vice presidents are most likely to cite budget constraints, likely due to their responsibility for allocating resources and proving return on investment (ROI) at the leadership level. Directors and managers are more likely to flag attribution and audience targeting, which are operational challenges affecting campaign success. Headcount gaps often appear in mid-level roles, suggesting that execution-heavy positions feel that they and their teams are understaffed, leading to everyone being overstretched.

The Biggest Obstacles in Demand Generation





The table below shows how respondents are distributed by role and company size. Most individual contributors and managers work at companies with 51 to 1,000 employees. These roles often report issues with headcount and audience targeting. That makes sense since they focus on day-to-day execution.

Directors and senior managers also appear often in this company size range. They are more likely to face challenges with attribution and campaign performance.

CMOs and vice presidents appear more often at either end of the company size spectrum. Since their roles are more strategic, they often cited budget and ROI concerns. At small companies, they may manage limited budgets directly. At large companies, they need to show the value of marketing investment, adding more context to the challenges discussed earlier.

How Respondents Are Distributed by Role and Company Size

Role	1-10 employees	11-50 employees	51-200 employees	201-500 employees	501-1,000 employees	1,001-5,000 employees	5,001-10,000 employees	10,000+ employees
CMO	1	11	9	8	5	5	0	0
Director	2	7	18	14	18	12	4	1
Individual contributor	4	15	31	17	18	7	4	2
Manager	4	24	38	34	38	16	6	3
Senior manager	1	13	16	14	18	15	1	5
Vice president	0	3	4	4	9	3	1	1

How Teams Are Solving These Challenges

Budget and increasing headcount

Teams are reallocating spend more aggressively, focusing on bottom-of-funnel tactics with clear ROI, such as intent data or pipeline-sourced content. Some companies are pooling resources across departments and using shared tools with sales to improve their efficiency. To extend bandwidth, many teams are leaning on contractors, AI tools, and outsourced agencies. Others are consolidating responsibilities into hybrid roles or training existing team members in demand gen and RevOps functions so they can work cross-functionally.

Actionable insights leading to clearer attribution

More companies are adopting first-touch and multi-touch attribution models using platforms like [Adobe Marketo Engage](#), [HubSpot Marketing Hub](#), or custom [Google Analytics](#) setups. There is a shift toward simplified dashboards that everyone can use to highlight a campaign's impact on the pipeline instead of vanity metrics. Some organizations are centralizing marketing and sales data into shared business intelligence (BI) platforms like [Tableau](#) or [Looker](#). Others are forming cross-functional working groups to regularly review campaign performance and interpret buyer signals together.



Finding the audience you need

Successful teams integrate third-party data into buyer intent tools, such as the TrustRadius [Intent-Driven Leads program](#), to help direct outreach. Personalization at scale using lifecycle-based nurture streams and segmented ad targeting is also helping to improve audience engagement.

Where Brand and Demand Meet

Marketers today are focusing their investments on actions that drive both efficiency and trust. The top priority is aligning sales and marketing around specific accounts, followed by better targeting of ad spend. Brand awareness is still important, with almost half of surveyed marketers saying they invest in reaching new audiences. Others are using intent data to segment leads or help prevent churn. This shows that brand and demand are no longer separate tracks. They are becoming part of one strategy.

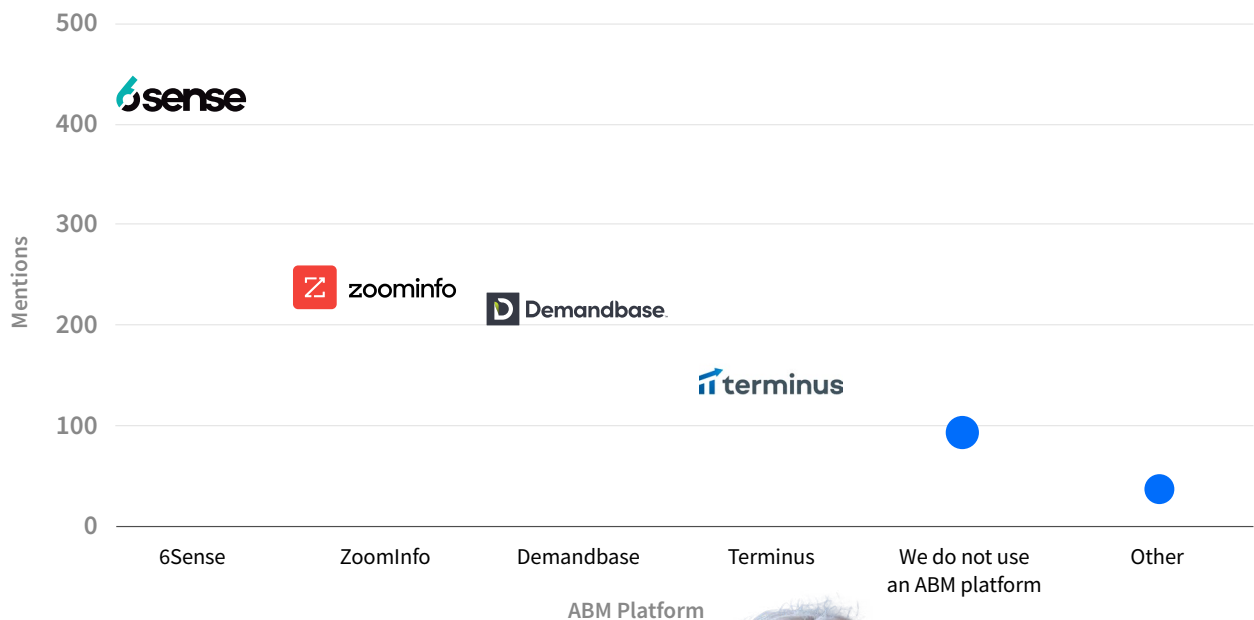
This shift mirrors the findings in our annual buyer's report, [Bridging the Trust Gap: B2B Tech Buying in the Age of AI](#). Buyers want more control, better information, and less sales pressure. Buyers are almost always aware of the product they buy before starting their research, meaning, if the vendor isn't investing in brand, they're missing deals. Marketers are adapting by using data to connect with the right buyers in the right way. Brand work is becoming more targeted and demand work is getting smarter. Together, they are helping teams build trust and pipeline at the same time.



The Demand Gen Tech Stack in 2025

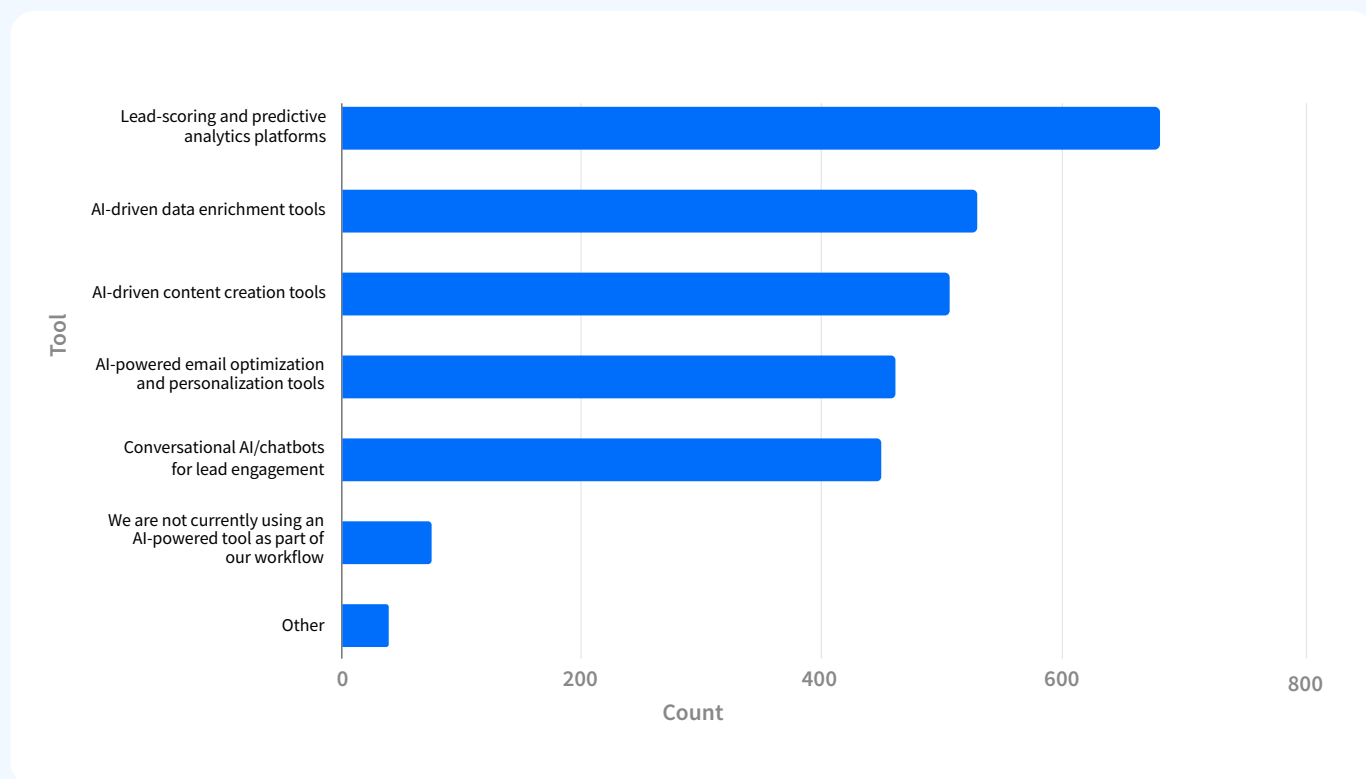
Most respondents use one of four [account-based marketing \(ABM\) platforms](#): [6sense](#) (427 mentions), [ZoomInfo](#) (229), [Demandbase](#) (207), or [Terminus](#) (166). Only a small number, with fewer than five mentions each, use other tools, which have been grouped as “Other.” Interestingly, 89 participants said they do not use an ABM platform, suggesting a strong market consolidation around a few key players and relatively low platform diversity across teams.

ABM Used in Demand Gen



AI adoption is already mainstream in demand generation. Most marketers are using AI to streamline key parts of their workflow, from identifying high-intent accounts with predictive lead-scoring tools to enriching contact data, generating content at scale, and optimizing email performance. Very few respondents say they are not using any AI at all, which suggests that for modern demand generation teams, AI is no longer a nice-to-have but a critical part of the stack.

AI-Powered Tools Used in Demand Gen



What Collaboration with Sales Really Looks Like

The marketers surveyed generally rated the alignment between their marketing and sales teams positively, with an **average score of 7.6 out of 10**. However, their open-ended responses reveal a more layered relationship. Many teams, especially those at mid-size organizations, described strong collaboration and clear strategic alignment.

“Sales seems to work in their own bubble and only reach out when they need something. We have a very active marketing team and this frustrates them.”

—Sales Operations Lead (501-1,000 employees)

Team size and structure also played a major role. Marketers from smaller companies often reported smoother collaboration, attributing it to fewer walls thanks to daily collaborations. That same respondent noted their alignment score wasn't perfect due to the challenges of scaling, a trend many others shared.

“Marketing is still just “passing things over.” There is a clear line in the sand and the teams are not rowing together for closed won business.”

—Director of Marketing Operations (501-1,000 employees)

Scaling and strategy misalignment were common themes among otherwise aligned teams. Several demand gen marketers said their marketing and sales functions worked well together but struggled when it came to prioritizing initiatives or expanding programs.

“The sales team continues to think they know best. We do have some cooperation but not to the level I'd like to have.”

—Marketing Operations Manager (201-500 employees)



Some marketers called out lead quality and follow-up issues as ongoing pain points. These comments suggest that even when alignment feels strong, operational gaps can limit revenue impact.

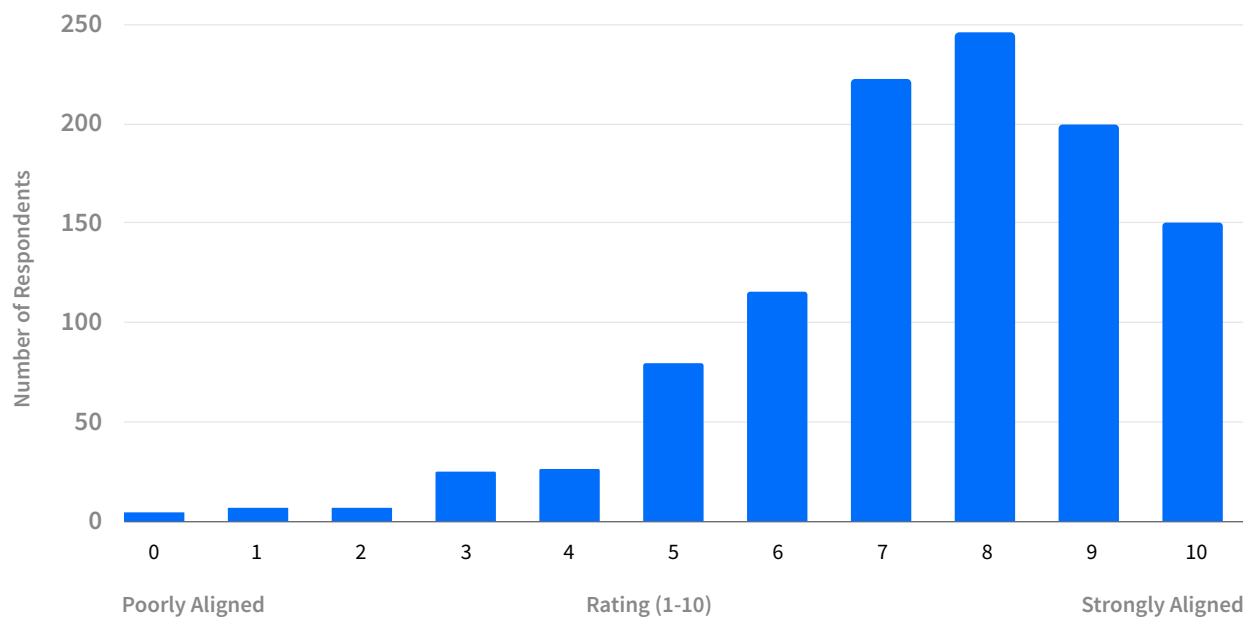
“We’ve made progress, but there’s a lingering gap in how we define lead stages. Sales wants SQLs, marketing still gets measured on MQLs.”

—Content Marketing Manager (51-200 employees)

“We don’t have a clear handoff process for what happens to once we generate leads and how do we classify those leads.”

—Marketing Manager, Demand Generation
(5,001-10,000 employees)

How Aligned Do You Feel Your Marketing and Sales Are?



Metrics That Matter

Metric type	Example metrics	Why it matters more
Conversion metrics	Lead-to-customer rate, MQL to SQL	Directly ties marketing efforts to closed revenue.
Quality metrics	Lead fit score, ICP match, sales acceptance rate	Ensures leads are a strong match for what the company offers.
Cost metrics	Cost per MQL, customer acquisition cost	Helps evaluate marketing ROI and optimize budget allocation.
Pipeline metrics	Pipeline generated per campaign, deal size	Focuses on meaningful outcomes, not just volume.
Engagement signals	Email click-through, asset downloads	Indicates early intent, but must tie back to conversion.
Sales follow-up	Response time, speed to lead	Impacts lead conversion rate and prospect experience.
Attribution data	Channel source, first touch vs. last touch	Supports informed optimization and campaign strategy decisions.

To evaluate marketing qualified lead (MQL) success, **most demand gen marketers rely on a mix of conversion, quality, cost, and revenue to define their metrics.** Conversion rate surfaced as the most-used metric, stating its importance when measuring actual business impact.

“I focus on key metrics like the conversion rate of leads into opportunities, the lifetime value of a customer, and the percentage of leads progressing to the closing stage. I also pay attention to the quality of leads, engagement levels in campaigns, and the interest shown in our communications. These help us understand how effective our demand generation efforts are.”

—Sales Marketing Manager (51-200 employees)

The quality and fit of leads are also very important, with several people sharing that their team's main focus is determining whether a lead will become a prospect who needs what they offer.

Financial efficiency also remains front and center, with the importance of cost per lead and total customer acquisition cost when assessing marketing success. After all, pipeline contribution and closed won revenue are the most important.

"We focus on qualified pipeline generated per campaign to connect lead effort directly to sales goals."

—CMO (201-500 employees)

Many also track engagement metrics like content downloads and email clicks as early indicators of intent. Others monitor sales team response time and attribution by source to help drive full-funnel performance.

"If they do not convert, they are just noise."

—Contributor marketer (501-1,000 employees)

The Sales Acceptance Litmus Test

"Sales acceptance rate is a critical metric, it shows how well aligned our lead generation efforts are with sales expectations."

MANAGER,
ENTERPRISE TECH COMPANY

When Qualified Leads Stall

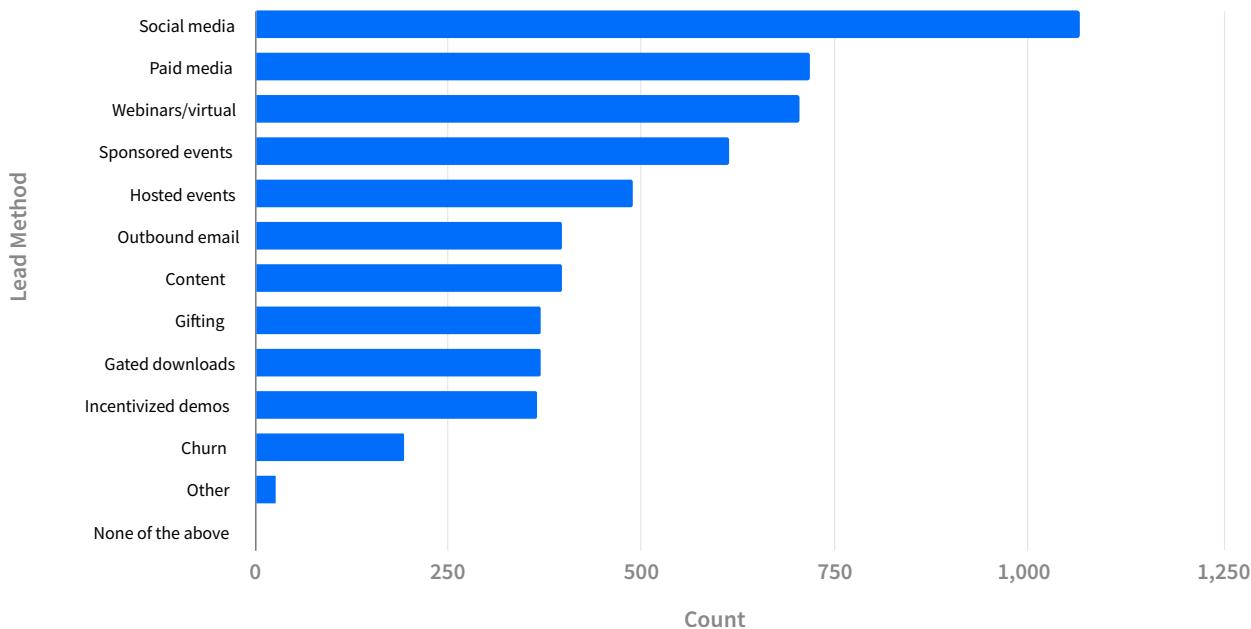
We primarily look at the conversion rate from MQL to SQL. If a lead is qualified but doesn't move through the funnel, we know something is off.

-Individual Contributor,
Mid-Sized Tech Company

How Demand Gen Leaders Are Driving Pipeline Today

Social media is the most commonly used demand generation tactic, followed by paid media and virtual events. The data shows demand gen marketers have a strong preference for digital-first outreach in combination with more traditional methods like hosted or sponsored events, which are still playing a significant role in pipeline building.

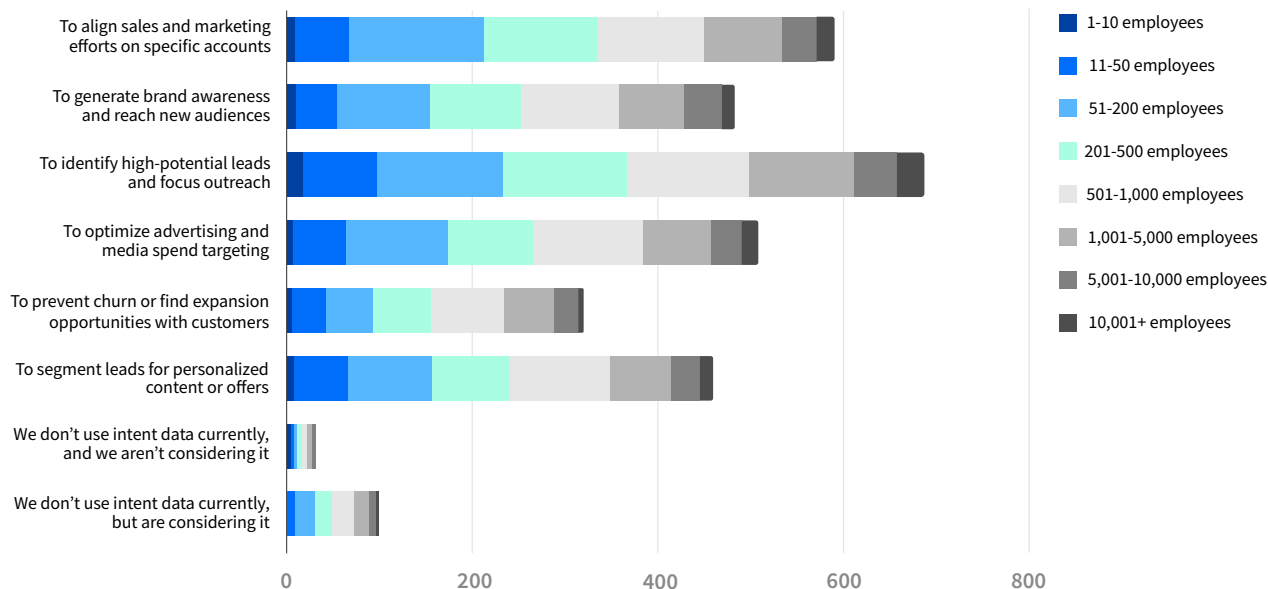
How Demand Gen Leaders Are Driving Pipeline Today



How Teams Use Intent Signals to Drive Results

This chart shows how over 1,000 demand gen marketers in the tech space surveyed in 2025 use intent data to inform their strategies, segmented by company size. Across the board, identifying high-quality leads remains a top priority. However, larger organizations are more likely to use intent signals to help align their sales and marketing teams, optimize media spend to save budget, and support brand awareness efforts. Smaller companies, however, tend to focus their efforts on lead prioritization and personalized outreach due to often having leaner team headcounts.

How Teams Use Intent Signals to Drive Results



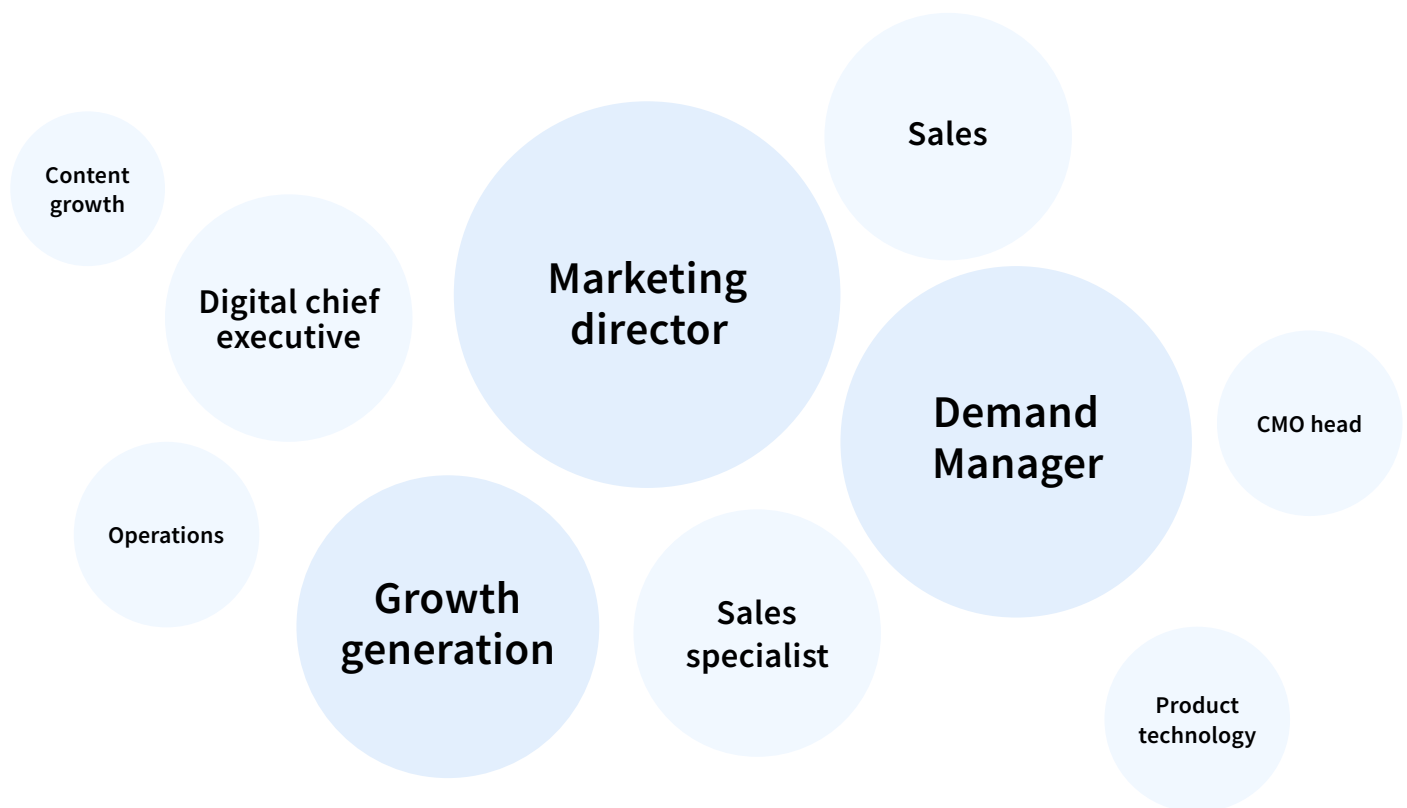
The Future of Demand Gen

Not just marketers anymore

Titles and expectations are changing. We received over 1,000 complete and verified responses to the 2025 State of Demand Generation in Tech survey, with over 500 variations on job title, showing just how many hats demand gen marketers often wear. This is not new. A mid-sized company manager shared, “The demand generation career path has always needed a mix of creative vision, technical expertise, and business acumen.”

The identity shift is already underway as we see “demand gen titles evolve, perhaps into growth strategist or revenue marketer, as the scope of [our] role broadens,” stated a director at a mid-size organization within the tech space. Whether growth strategists or revenue marketers, professionals will be expected to lead full-funnel strategies, not just top-of-funnel.

Skills like strategic thinking, storytelling, and cross-functional collaboration will be highly valued, creating a demand for continuous learning. Successful demand gen marketers will need to constantly level up their skills to keep pace with new tools and continuously changing privacy regulations. Setting aside professional development time to improve digital skills—leading to a greater adaptability and keeping you ahead of trends—will be critical to your long-term success.



Breaking down silos to increase revenue

The walls between marketing, sales, product, and customer success are falling, which is great news for many companies. Demand gen is not only about launching email campaigns to fill the top of the funnel. To drive real, actionable pipeline that makes revenue impact, marketers have to break down those silos and make driving demand part of everyone's job. They're working shoulder-to-shoulder with sales to ensure tighter alignment and are expected to take greater ownership of revenue outcomes. As one manager from a large organization put it, "The role will evolve from campaign execution to strategic growth enablement."

This change means **demand gen is becoming a true cross-functional growth that needs to encompass everything from RevOps and customer experience to product strategy.** One enterprise company's director noted that we will "see more demand gen pros embedded in sales teams, acting as campaign architects tied directly to revenue outcomes." It's about building and launching strategies that connect every part of the buyer journey, from first touch to long-term retention.



The Future of Demand Gen—AI Automation Will Dominate

It's everywhere you turn. Many people say **AI is expected to improve many aspects of day-to-day life, including the demand generation landscape.** Automating routine tasks enables marketers to focus more on strategy and creativity than on monotonous program maintenance. Content creation, lead scoring, personalized messaging driven by AI, and predictive analytics will become essential elements to help advance marketing strategies and make companies successful.

As one CMO from a mid-sized organization put it, “Artificial intelligence will do more lifting, ranging from content creation to predictive lead scoring and campaign optimization. AI will automate much of the manual work.” However, while learning-based tech promises huge efficiency improvements, actual effectiveness will depend on how well teams are trained to use these tools. “You can leverage countless AI tools to create and launch work,” noted an enterprise company’s senior director, “but that doesn’t guarantee it’s the right work.” Additionally, for AI to truly enhance work processes, **companies must maintain oversight of all content built, maintain the factor of human judgment, and ensure the success of AI-driven initiatives.**



Hyper-personalization with a data-driven approach

Many responses predict a shift toward even more granular segmentation to create personalized experiences with real-time engagement powered by data and intent signals. Demand gen will rely more heavily on data analytics and attribution modeling to help define performance measurement. That means **strong data hygiene and interpretation skills** are needed to help prove ROI and guide business decisions and direction.

Cross-functionally, there's an **increasing shift toward revenue accountability and away from vanity metrics**. For example, think about website traffic. A spike in traffic looks great, but it means little if visitors don't convert, engage, or return. Conversion rate to MQLs or revenue is directly influenced, meaning traffic is only valuable if it leads to pipeline or closed business.

A high click-through rate (CTR) is nice, but if those clicks don't convert, it's just a waste of resources. Conversion to booked meetings or influenced pipeline means that clicks must lead to action to be valuable. Strategies will focus on targeting smaller, well-defined segments using behavior, engagement, and intent data. Due to that, ABM and omnichannel personalization will see increased use.



Vanity Metrics vs. Revenue Accountable Metrics

Vanity metric	Revenue accountable metric	Why it matters more
Website traffic	Conversion rate to MQL or revenue is influenced when impacting the mid-prospecting journey	Traffic is only valuable if it leads to closed business.
Social media likes/followers	Pipeline or revenue influenced by social media campaigns	Engagement is irrelevant unless it moves leads through the funnel.
Email open rate	MQLs generated per email campaign	Opens don't equal impact—you must look at downstream results.
Number of leads	Pipeline value per lead	Volume does not equal quality because high-converting leads are what matter.
Asset download counts	Opportunity creation that influences pipeline	Even gated content downloads don't prove intent unless there is follow-through.
Click-through rate (CTR)	Conversion to booked meetings or influenced pipeline	Clicks must lead to action to be valuable.
Webinar/event registrations	Attendee conversion rate to opportunity or influenced revenue	Registrants aren't meaningful unless they engage and convert.



Dream Spend. Unlimited Budget. Every Demand Gen Marketer's Fantasy

Dream spend and unlimited budget are words every demand gen marketer wants to hear. When demand gen leaders were asked to prioritize expansion across three fronts (investment in media, data intelligence, and a deeper audience engagement) with no budget constraints, the most common wish list item was paid media, followed closely by intent data, virtual events, and influencer marketing.

This shift toward brand trust signals more scalable metrics that support the bottom line.

Many marketers called out the value of tools that can offer the buyer visibility to improve their mid-funnel efficiency. This idea of quality over quantity reflects the trend where marketers are focusing on insight-driven lead strategy over lead volume.

“Intent data is on my dream list because it gives us the clearest picture of buyer behavior. That level of visibility is game-changing.”

—Director (501-1,000 employees)

Other marketers highlighted the desire to connect more authentically with their prospective buyers. Pointing to the rise in peer-led marketing strategies and more of a storytelling approach by leveraging review platforms. Throughout the survey results, there is a clear interest in combining paid strategies with trust-building platforms.

“Influencer marketing could make a big impact for our brand's global social media presence.”

—Digital Marketing Manager (1,001-5,000 employees)

“It will become more dynamic and will have new channels open up for demand gen. E.g who would have thought LinkedIn influencer marketing would be a thing.”

—Sr. Manager, Sales Ops (201-500 employees)



Want to see how companies are using intent data to hit pipeline goals?

Check out our TrustRadius Intent Driven Leads overview and explore how AudiencePlus helped one mid-market company multiply their engagement 5x through a revamped content and virtual event strategy. Contact us to learn more.



Executive Conclusion: Allyson

Demand gen today isn't for the faint of heart. Budgets are strained across the board, yet expectations keep rising. AI has become a lifeline for doing more with less, while the demand for high-quality leads—not just volume—has never been louder.

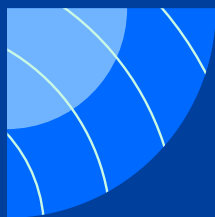
And as the lines blur between marketing, sales, product, and customer success, demand gen is increasingly a team sport with shared accountability for revenue. Those who succeed in this environment are the ones who collaborate cross-functionally, embrace new tools that help them scale, lean into their customers, and prioritize signal over noise.

Allyson Havener
CMO, TrustRadius



Methodology

Data for this report was sourced from the TrustRadius and AudiencePlus network via an online survey. In April 2025, we sent online surveys to demand gen professionals within the tech space and we received complete, verified responses from 1,076 marketers. All respondents were offered a nominal incentive (\$10 gift card) as a thank-you for their time. For a full list of survey questions and answer choices, or if you have any questions about the data, email us at hello@trustradius.com.



Ready to elevate your tech marketing?

Start a conversation with us today.

About TrustRadius

TrustRadius is the most trusted platform for technology buyers, offering comprehensive, vetted product information and verified customer reviews. Our content empowers buyers to make confident decisions, while technology providers use TrustRadius to tell their story, engage high-intent prospects, and gain valuable customer insights.

More than 12 million people visit TrustRadius annually to create and consume high-quality content, including ratings, reviews, and in-depth product data.

Founded by experienced entrepreneurs and based in Austin, Texas, TrustRadius is backed by Mayfield Fund, LiveOak Venture Partners, and Next Coast Ventures.

About AudiencePlus

AudiencePlus is a content experience platform that allows B2B SaaS marketers to automatically distribute content to targeted audiences and tie content performance to pipeline while delivering beautiful brand experiences.